

AN APPEAL
TO
THE MEMBERS
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,
RELATING TO THE
Rev. Dr. WHITE's Bampton Lectures.

BY NO ACADEMIC.

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A P P E A L, &c.

WHERE is the man, if any such there be, who will not stand forth in defence of injured innocence? Let him be branded, not only for meanness, but for infamy; let his name be no longer enrolled among the sons of science; and far be it from me, although I profess myself to be no academic, to remain an insensible spectator of the triumphs of falshood, to be unmoved and inactive in the cause of truth, to sink into the vortex of listless

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indifference,

indifference, only because I can have no share, either in the trophies of immortal renown, or in the disgrace of an irreversible defeat.

It is indeed a melancholy fact, that mankind in general are fonder of depreciating than paying due respect to the characters of the learned; that they are desirous to degrade them in the eye of their contemporaries; that they exhibit their weaknesses with greater ardour than their merits; and condemn them for their failings with more assiduity than revere them for their virtues: whether it is a reluctance inherent in our nature to applaud their attainments, because we are conscious of our own weakness and incapacity, or whether it is a degree of envy that provokes us to censure common faults with malignity, I will not pretend to determine. But these are palliations which cannot be urged in favour of your Arabic Professor. He has forfeited all claim, both to the support of his friends, and to the candour of his

his adversaries. He has exalted himself above the level of common praise and common distinction, by means the most intriguing, and by artifices the most unmanly. He has done what in the eye of an honest man cannot be excused. He has built his literary fame upon that foundation which will be condemned by posterity; for the prejudice of the present age seems to be so glaring, that undisputed facts can have no influence over the public opinion. Shame upon the false tenderness, upon the fashionable delicacy, of modern morality!

*Per damna, per cædes ab ipso
Ducit opes animumque ferro.*

He has rioted for years in the reputation which belonged not to himself. He has obtained those rewards from characters the most celebrated and most dignified, for services which he did not perform, and for publications he did not compose. Now, where is his modesty? that cardinal virtue which his advocates so warmly contend for? If these are

the characteristics of modesty, I do not envy Dr. White the boundless possession of his favourite quality. These are charges which will require the utmost extent of his intellectual powers to varnish, and the artificial sophistry of his eloquence to elude.

The Professor, perhaps, relies much upon the good name he has already acquired; and is too confident that no proofs either against his veracity or his learning, will shake or diminish that fund of approbation, which, till the present moment, has been unabated. Perhaps he declines an answer, because by answering, he may only more firmly substantiate the charges against him: and to treat them with contempt, is an undeniable test of conscious guilt. Can he deny the evidence which has been produced against him, or does he mean to deride it? Whatever may be his purposes, his present conduct is neither liberal nor equitable. Unabashed at the decisions of a literary tribunal,

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he defies the ordeal of justice, and, undismayed at the detection of so palpable an imposture, he despises the allegations of truth. With an insensibility, which the terrors of disgrace cannot awaken ; or with an indignity, which neither tenderness nor severity can remove ; he disdains to descend to a task so humiliating as the defence of his own character, or so unmanly as the cause of honesty. But we may say of his fame as Cicero says of money ; “ Ut est apud poetam nescio quem, male parta, male dilabatur—A good name, in the eye of Dr. White, is not worthy of preserving. But although he is himself lax in his own cause, a cause so serious and so important, he has not lost that veneration for his own consequence, as not to enlist an officious scribbler among his adherents, to fight for him with the sword of slander, and oppose his adversaries with the instrument of abuse.

A pamphlet has been lately published, written by a member of one of the Universities, which equally rouses my indignation and amazement. It does not deserve even the notice which I have here taken of it, had it not contained the most virulent, illiberal, and gross reflections on men, who really, instead of incurring opprobrium, merit approbation. The warmth of an advocate, when it descends to the meanness of insult and abuse, injures, instead of defends, the cause of justice. The charge itself against Dr. White is totally disregarded; the author leaves him without advancing one single argument of any weight, by which he seems to have betrayed, not supported, his guilty friend. When the cause of truth is thus perverted, and recourse is to be had to dark and contumacious insinuations, we may soon bid farewell to its merits, and leave every unprejudiced mind to decide for itself. I trust Dr. White does not countenance such officious advocates: if he does, woe be to his character, as a Man, a Christian, and a Clergyman.

To convict the understanding, and to improve the heart, is the province only of truth. Such is not the character of the pamphlet in question; and indeed I have mentioned it only to condemn it. For no cause, be it ever so weak, is in need of such miserable defendants.

Let it not be forgotten that I know neither party; that in declaring my opinions I am not actuated by private and mercenary views; but that I stand forward, directed by common sense and honesty, and speak only from a calm and unprejudiced attention to the subject.

The University of Oxford has hitherto maintained the very first character in the world for learning. It has been looked up to as the bulwark of science—as the ornament of religion. Still persevere in the progress of such noble attainments. Deign not to mingle with the common herd of slanderers and calumniators,

tors, who are ever in wait to undermine the fabric of truth, and to degrade the liberty of the human heart. Do not demean yourselves, so as to determine to defend such an ignominious cause, because a contrary conduct may eventually redound to your own disgrace. Let it not be said at Oxford that we espoused Dr. White in order to maintain our own dignity. Will you suffer the judgment of posterity to be deluded by your hasty decision of a charge so important to religion, to morality, and to yourselves. You appointed Dr. White to preach the Bampton Lectures in the year 1784, and which appointment did credit to yourselves as well as to him. Immediately after the nomination, knowing himself to possess talents inadequate to the completion of the whole task, he solicited the aid of Mr. Badcock, who had before distinguished himself for some good religious productions. He then thought himself rescued from much uneasiness, and compounded with Mr. Badcock to reward him for his services.

services. He then began to be in fear of detection, and had recourse to intrigue. " Our
 " correspondence," says Dr. White in a letter
 to Badcock, " must be a profound secret: the
 " world suspects that my journey has not been
 " a mere excursion of pleasure. You will
 " therefore please to direct your letters to me,
 " To John Richardson, Esq. Wadham Col-
 " lege, Oxford. Mr. Richardson has been
 " member of our College, and now lives in
 " London; and I shall give strict orders to the
 " porter to bring all letters thus addressed im-
 " mediately to me. The letters I send to you
 " I shall myself give into the hands of the post-
 " man as he goes out of Oxford." Here then
 the scene of artifice opens, which gradually
 proceeds, in interruption and progression, to the
 conclusion of the drama. In the same letter
 he sends him the parts he wished him to under-
 take, namely, Lectures I. VII. and VIII.
 " Of the first I have nothing further to say,
 " than to desire, if it can be done with pro-
 priety,

“ propriety, that some elegant compliment may
 “ be paid to the University. Lecture VIII. I
 “ leave wholly to yourself. The VIIth. (or the
 “ different effects of Christianity and Maho-
 “ metism) I shall send you some time hence a
 “ large skeleton of.” He then subjoins a pro-
 spectus of it. Here then, without attempting
 to produce further evidence, is discovered a se-
 cret correspondence between the Professor and
 Mr. Badcock. And who will be so hardy as
 to deny its not only suspicious, but evident, ten-
 dency. He proceeds in other letters to ac-
 knowledge, from time to time, his great obli-
 gations to Mr. Badcock. He writes “ your
 “ Introduction to Lecture I. gives me the most
 “ perfect satisfaction; it is extremely ingenious
 “ and incomparably excellent. I did not
 “ think it possible for my remarks to have been
 “ introduced with such perfect propriety. Of
 “ Lecture III. I have already sent you two
 “ small parts in two letters: These two parts
 “ constituting the exordium of Lecture III. I
 “ presume

" presume you have, and I request the favour
 " of you to undertake the subject from this
 " place, and to continue it up to the final esta-
 " blishment of Christianity. I devolve the
 " whole business on yourself. I most earnestly
 " intreat you to finish this third Lecture as
 " soon as convenient; and to adapt your man-
 " ner of writing, as much as you can, to the
 " style of my printed sermon."

And here again the scene exhibits an instance
 of the same secrecy, and the same artifice.

" P. S. In future your letters addressed to Mr.
 " Parsons will be punctually brought to me
 " unopened."

Thus ends the preaching: and now for the
 recompense of his assistance; in the application
 of which, I know not whether his obligation
 or his ingratitude is predominant. He expres-
 ses his obligations in the most open and gene-
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rous manner, but the tardiness of his remittances betrays his injustice.

No man, under the indigent circumstances of Mr. Badcock, would display his learning upon so arduous and important a subject unrewarded. It would be also unreasonable to suppose that the Professor would not compensate his laborious studies, by which he himself was likely to receive such material distinction. That distinction he in some measure did receive before Mr. Badcock's death. And it is well known by those who were in the habits of intimacy with Mr. Badcock, that he felt himself hurt at the conduct of the Professor, and declared himself dissatisfied with it. He perceived the sermons to which he had contributed so large a share were daily advancing in the good opinion of the public. He saw also, with just concern, the reputed author raised to preferment, and, from general opinion, likely to obtain something yet more valuable. This roused

roused the honest indignation of Badcock ; he fathomed the duplicity of the Professor's treatment to him, and wisely resented it by a disclosure of the truth.

I will not say the note of five hundred pounds was solely for services already received ; perhaps also for services to be in future received in the Egyptian History. But it is unquestionably the act of a madman alone, to promise payment of a note of so large an amount for services to be received to a man evidently in ill health, and consequently very unlikely to live to fulfil so laborious an undertaking. It is a mark of a pusillanimous mind to take advantage of the distressed or the ignorant. Dr. White may be very careless of common objects, and so unacquainted with the common transactions and concerns of life, as to commit the most egregious mistakes, or betray the simplest knowledge: and although this argument is adduced by his friends to shelter his integrity,

grity, it is *in toto* fallacious; and such an act is equally unfounded in common reason and common sense. But Dr. White is best able to judge of his own actions; he knows whether he can sleep with a consciousness of his own innocence, after the conduct he has exercised to his deceased friend, and to the surviving sister of his friend. The very letter to the sister of Badcock confirms his guilt. But who can shroud him from the reproaches of his own heart? Not all the brilliance of his language, nor all the sophistry of his learning, can be able to sooth the turbulence of a guilty mind. And his ingratitude seems to be exceeded only by his audacity.

Dr. Gabriel was called forward by the voice of the public to justify the accusations which had been reiterated in private companies to the prejudice of Dr. White's literary fame, and to the injury of his personal reputation. Dr. Gabriel did come forward; has produced the
facts

facts which were so universally called for. I forbear to enter into a detail of the merits of his tract as a composition; but, in my apprehension, it is written with such an attention to liberality, such an unvaried mixture of candour and sincerity, and such a laudable manliness of spirit, as the adherents of Dr. White have disdained to imitate. He has proved his provocation; he has vindicated his interference. It is surely no unusual thing, when a relation dies, to call in the assistance of some friend, especially in the circumstances of Miss Badcock, to negotiate any part of the affairs, or settle any of the private or public business of the deceased. In such a character, and with such authority, Dr. Gabriel became active in the management of the concerns of his late friend: it was an officiousness, it may be said, but it was an honourable officiousness, to undertake so troublesome a business. Acting, therefore, under such a sanction, he could not but notice—he could not but at length press

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the payment of the note, which was found in the possession of Mr. Badcock. It matters not an iota, whether the services were, or were not, received, which incurred the note—that must remain only in the breast of Dr. White. But the note was produced, and it would have been only the part of an honest man, even if he had not been bound by such indissoluble obligations, to have acknowledged it. But what was the conduct of the Arabic Professor? Let it for ever be buried in oblivion. It is an easy matter to discriminate between the uprightness of an honest man, and the chicane of hypocrisy. So much for the pecuniary rewards for services, some of which are confessedly avowed, and the rest no man has a right to question; it remains for the Professor himself openly and unequivocally to undeceive the public.

Thus much then is proved, without contradiction, that Mr. Badcock supplied a very considerable share of the Bampton Lectures.

But

But is this the only charge? What says Gabriel?—"That the time may come, when
 " Dr. White will have reason to be sorry for
 " the insinuations which his advocate has
 " thrown out, not only against myself, but
 " against a very respectable clergyman, from
 " whom Dr. White himself *most certainly* re-
 " ceived assistance, and who is able to do
 " himself justice, whenever he thinks proper
 " to explain a conduct, which I *know* to have
 " been directed by *candour, delicacy, and mode-*
 " *ration.*" Now what does Dr. White say?
 " Dr. Parr is at present employed in revising
 " this Lecture, (Lec. II.) and has already sent
 " me his revision of the first half, executed in
 " a masterly manner."

Dr. Parr is yet alive; his character is eminently high in the republic of letters; and if, as is here virtually implied, he took so considerable a part in the revision, if not in the composition, of the Bampton Lectures, let him

declare to the public his own particular portion, that the world may estimate the merits of each party, and be able to discriminate the various divisions; and thus know to whom they are indebted for the metaphysical, to whom for the doctrinal, and to whom for the practical parts of the work. Undisguised by the machinations and passions of the multitude, uninfluenced by all collateral considerations, let him stand forward as an advocate of truth, which no philosophy can weaken, no policy explain away. It is what he owes to himself, to the University, and to the world. Then may the adherents of the venerable Professor "hide their diminished heads."

How systematical also were the operations of the Professor in regard to secrecy. He carefully concealed from the one assistant what great services he was at the same time receiving from the other. But, say they, to receive assistance, is only what every author in
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the progress of his studies is guilty of—Yes—But where are authors, who have thus surreptitiously assumed such eminence of character and such ecclesiastical dignity? Is it not their practice to acknowledge their obligations publicly to the world, especially when they are of such importance?—The advocates of Dr. White are not even content with thus evading the charges, but apply arguments the most sophistical to support them. The man, say they, who could form such a noble plan, claims the whole merit even of its execution. This is indeed very strange reasoning. We all know, to have formed the plan of the Bampton Lectures, required great ingenuity, great judgment, and great taste; but he that planned them might be ignorant of the grand points of composition; he might be unacquainted with the beauties of imagery and of phraseology; and consequently unable to execute that plan. To enforce such an argument, and attempt to compare, when no comparison can be drawn, is only an

additional instance of their own weakness. It is again said, that the uniformity of the style discovers its originality; and only one person could have written in so regular a manner—This his letter to Mr. Badcock fully confutes. It is indeed an Hypothesis, may be best referred to the same hasty critics to determine. But when the eye of discernment and impartiality will peruse them with microscopic attention, the fallacy of such an assertion will vanish.

It is no new measure; I by no means affirm it to be so, to receive assistance in the prosecution of any work from men more ingenious and more able; but it is singular not to acknowledge it. Had Dr. White subjoined to his Appendix the important obligations he was under to Mr. Badcock, Dr. Parr, or to whomsoever he was indebted for literary services in that work, it would have silenced all inquiries; it would have virtually, though not particularly, declared

declared the addition of their labours in the production of it; it would have been a tacit acquiescence in their services. The censure, indeed, consists not in Dr. White's obtaining assistance, but in denying that assistance. Let him then now own; (for he has yet an opportunity left to retrieve his sinking character) let him faithfully publish his own, and his friend's parts, and explain a conduct, which appears in its present shades to be dark and dishonourable; equally tinged with the most insidious measures and fallacious purposes.

Under the mask of ecclesiastical dignity, under the exhilarating beams of preferment, he may secure that protection, which his character as a man cannot entitle him to. The world wishes well to Dr. White; the world is fully sensible of his high attainments; of his laudable exertions in the Oriental Language; of his eminent services to the church. But these are accusations which neither dignity of cha-
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racter,

racter, nor elegance of literature, nor all the charms of philosophy can fairly elude.

Raro antecedentem scelestum
Deferuit pede pœna claudo.

These are accusations which the production even of the Egyptian History, in all its boasted splendour, and magnificent ornament, can scarcely wipe off. Dr. White has surely sagacity enough to discover that the public will not be thus deluded :

Valet ima summis
Mutare, et insignem attenuat——
Obscura promens.

Many invidious reflections and unjustifiable abuses have been offered to the character of Mr. Badcock, in which much might have been spared through respect to a man of genius. Although I am an advocate for *de mortuis nil nisi verum*, I despise the *nil nisi malum*. Mr. Badcock possessed that erudition, taste, and judgment, those eminent excellencies of genius, which invigorated the powers of his understanding,

derstanding, and animated the faculties of his mind. His erudition was superior, his knowledge extensive, his taste elegant, and his judgment accurate. He was manly, liberal, and candid, in his opinions of men and things. At the same time, the gentleness of his manners, his amiable affability, his puerile modesty, in no inferior degree associated to form his domestic character. He could unite the *æquam in rebus arduis* with practical philosophy. And had he lived, he would doubtless have been a conspicuous ornament to the church and to the world. To γὰρ γέρας ἐστὶ θάνατον—

To remain silent under the reiterated accusations against him, is a piece of stoicism which no apology can well justify. It is a defiance of all truth; it is a disrespect to his own character, which intrinsic innocence cannot palliate. It is the part of a man, the moment he feels himself injured, particularly in his reputation, to learn the foundation of that injury, and

and to repel its attack. For it is a breach of the rules of society to calumniate any man without a cause; to harass him without provocation; or to impute to him that which is untrue. Why did not Dr. White then, upon the first rumour against his character, restrain its vindictive tendency? Why did he not boldly deny the charges so repeatedly echoed to his own prejudice? Is the Professor exempt from the common feeling of praise or censure? Surely not of the former—those who know him, know also his susceptibility of applause; know also his defiance of censure. But it is no proof of his own innocence, to continue unmoved during all the notoriety of accusation alleged against him: it is no proof of the purity of his heart, or the manliness of his character, to assume an indifference of thought, amidst all the virulence of invective, and the force of detection. What can be the opinion of impartial men of such a conduct? They must justly denounce a sentence against him who is

publicly accused of imposing upon the world, of endeavouring also to impose upon the deceased assistant in his studies, had not the vigilance of friendship interposed, without repelling those accusations, or confessing his own imprudencies. His name will be transmitted with infamy to the latest posterity ; and his conduct exposed, as a sea-mark, for others to avoid the same shoals and rocks upon which he was wrecked. He will be like a lamp set upon a hill to warn the traveller of the danger of his path, that he may turn away from the same disgraceful pursuit. Dr. White has long enjoyed, and let him continue to enjoy, the noblest elevation of literary fame ; his high acquisitions in Oriental Literature have been regarded with reverence and esteem ; and the Bampton Lectures adduced in support of those unrivaled attainments. And yet he remains silent amidst the most extravagant accusations, and the most serious attacks. What shall we say then of the production of his genius, when those very productions

productions are plucked from their reputed foundation, and placed upon the summit of a different structure? What shall we say of these venerable qualities so highly attributed to the Arabic Professor? Shall we not lament the audacity of such an imposture; and shall we not triumph at the degradation of human ambition?

Dr. White! If you have any regard for the dignity of your own reputation; any respect for that church, which the writings bearing your name have so successfully defended; if you have any veneration for the memory of the dead; any esteem for the sacred and inviolable declarations of friendship; if you yet possess any relic of that genuine modesty, a virtue so ingloriously boasted of as your own, come forward openly and manly, without disguise, without hypocrisy, and in the name of common honesty refute the charges which bear down so heavy against your character. They
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are not of a trifling nature ; they are too serious to be despised ; and the University of Oxford, inflamed as it is by party and personal prejudice, will decide with every reasonable allowance in favour of their Professor. It is a species of criminality, that will not admit of either equivocation or denial ; but, if uncontradicted, will terminate in the irretrievable disgrace of your name, without even the consolation of self-applause or self-approbation.

I appeal to the University, in their collective capacity, as members of that society, to whom the Lectures were delivered, and to whom the imposition was more immediately offered. The friends of the Arabic Professor may endeavour to extenuate the charges, but they cannot deny them. They can advance no plausible pretences, no honourable intentions, which can have actuated his conduct. You
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may receive him with all the usual marks of University distinction, all the external reverence due to learning, and all the respect due to literary reputation ; but you must know, it is only playing the hypocrite to screen yourselves. You dare not condemn Dr. White for by condemning Dr. White, you condemn yourselves. You are only heaping that odium upon your ownelves which justly belongs to an individual.

It is doubtless vain, probably it is needless, to affirm my own independence in thus writing my sentiments.—I have attempted to give my thoughts upon the subject ; and hope and trust, for the honour of human nature, that Dr. White will not suffer himself to remain under the lash of so severe, so serious, a charge. Heavy as it is, and unable as he may be to satisfy the public of his own innocence, after the production of
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such incontestible facts, he may meliorate its severity by his own confession.

———— frustra medicina paratur,
Cum mala per longas invaluere moras.

THE END.

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lack inconvertible paper, he may purchase it
freely by his own money.



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